

**NEBRASKA**  
**2022**  
***HUNTING INCIDENT REPORT***



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## 2022 Nebraska Hunting Incidents

Hunting in Nebraska continues to be one of the safest recreational activities in which friends and families may participate. Hunting incident numbers have decreased significantly in the past 40 years, with an average incident rate of approximately three incidents per 100,000 hunters over the past seven years. The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and the nearly 500 certified volunteer instructors continue to strive to reduce the number of hunting incidents to zero.

During 2022, there were five hunting incidents reported in Nebraska resulting in personal injury. All reported incidents involved firearms. Two incidents resulted in debilitating injuries, one in moderate injuries, one in severe injuries and one incident was fatal. This compares to eight hunting incidents in 2021, one of which was fatal.

All five hunting incidents involved male shooters and the use of a rifle. Four of the incidents involved a victim (all of which were other hunters of the same hunting party), and one of the incidents was self-inflicted. Four of the shooters were a graduate of a hunter education course, and one of the shooters was not a graduate of a hunter education course. There were no reported incidents involving a fall from an elevated position (i.e., a tree stand) in 2022.

The tables and charts within this report illustrate the historical data collected for hunting incidents in Nebraska.

### Contributing Factors to 2022 Incidents:

(Individual incidents may have more than one contributing factor, contributing factors can be counted multiple times.)

Contributing Factors	Factors Reported by Law Enforcement
Victim out of sight of shooter	
Victim covered by shooter swinging on game	2
Failure to identify target	
Victim in line of fire	3
Ricochet	
Defective ammunition	1
Firearm fell, insecure rest	
Shooter stumbled and fell	
Trigger caught on object	1
Failure to check beyond target	1
Loading firearm	
Unloading firearm	1
Discharge firearm in/on a vehicle	1
Improper crossing of obstacle	
Clubbing game with firearm	
Careless or reckless handling of firearm	1
Place/remove loaded firearm from vehicle	
Drop firearm	
Horseplay while hunting	
Shooting across roadway	1
Run with loaded firearm	
Obstruction of barrel	
Careless handling of archery equipment	
Other	

## 2022 Individual Hunting Incident Summary

**April 30 – Hamilton County – Raccoon Hunting:** (Class B) A 16-year-old male shot his 17-year-old male hunting partner while attempting to shoot a raccoon. The victim sustained fatal injuries. **Always point the muzzle of your firearm in a safe direction. Be certain of your target, what's in front of it and what's beyond it.**

**Nov. 18 – Buffalo County – Deer Hunting:** (Class B) A 12-year-old male was hunting with his 37-year-old male hunting partner, waiting for a deer to present a shot. The 12-year-old was in a kneeling position behind and to the right of the 37-year-old when they both fired at the deer. The 12-year-old's shot struck the 37-year-old's right elbow, resulting in debilitating injuries. **Be certain of your target, what's in front of it and what's beyond it.**

**Nov. 19 – Saunders – Deer Hunting:** (Class A) A 47-year-old male shot a 22-year-old male in his hunting party while shooting at a deer from his blind. The victim, who was in a different blind roughly 120 yards away, was struck by the bullet in both hands, resulting in severe injuries. **Be certain of your target, what's in front of it and what's beyond it.**

**Nov. 19 – Kimball County – Deer Hunting:** (Class B) A 53-year-old male shot himself in his right foot while unloading his rifle in a vehicle, resulting in moderate injuries. **Treat every firearm as if it is loaded. Always point the muzzle of your firearm in a safe direction.**

**Nov. 20 – Red Willow County – Deer Hunting:** (Class B) A 54-year-old male shot a 20-year-old male in his hunting party while walking back to a vehicle. The 54-year-old was walking with his rifle slung on his shoulder, behind the 20-year-old, and up a ditch through tall vegetation. The rifle suddenly fired, striking the 20-year-old's buttocks. The victim sustained debilitating injuries. **Always point the muzzle of your firearm in a safe direction.**

### **International Hunter Education Association USA (IHEA-USA)**

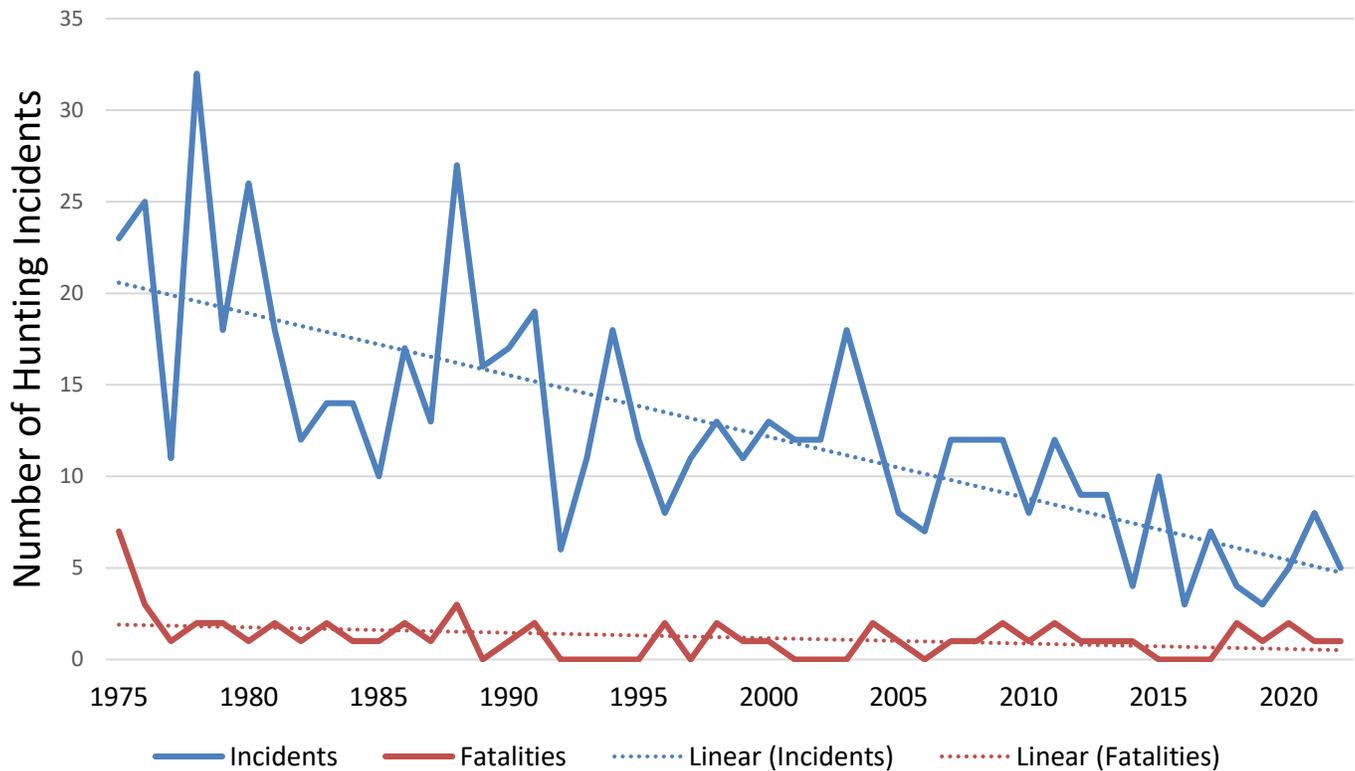
#### **Hunting Incident Report Guidelines:**

- **Class A** - when a hunter discharged a hunting implement while legally involved in hunting
- **Class B** - when a hunter discharged a hunting implement while illegally involved in hunting
- **Class C** - when a hunter fell from an elevated stand
- **Non-classified** – when a hunter sustains an injury by a means other than Class A, B or C

### **Nebraska Game and Parks Commission Hunting Incident Report Guidelines:**

- **Hunting Incident** is described as: “An occurrence or event that results in the physical injury or death of a person or persons which involves the discharge or use of a hunting implement while engaged in hunting activity” OR “An occurrence or an event that results in the physical injury or death of a person or persons involuntary while afield engaging in a hunting related activity from the time the person ascends to the time the person descends from the elevated position.”
- **Hunting** is described as: “To pursue, take, attempt to take, search for, stalk or lie in wait for any game, game bird or game animal.”

## Nebraska Hunting Incidents & Fatalities 1975-2022



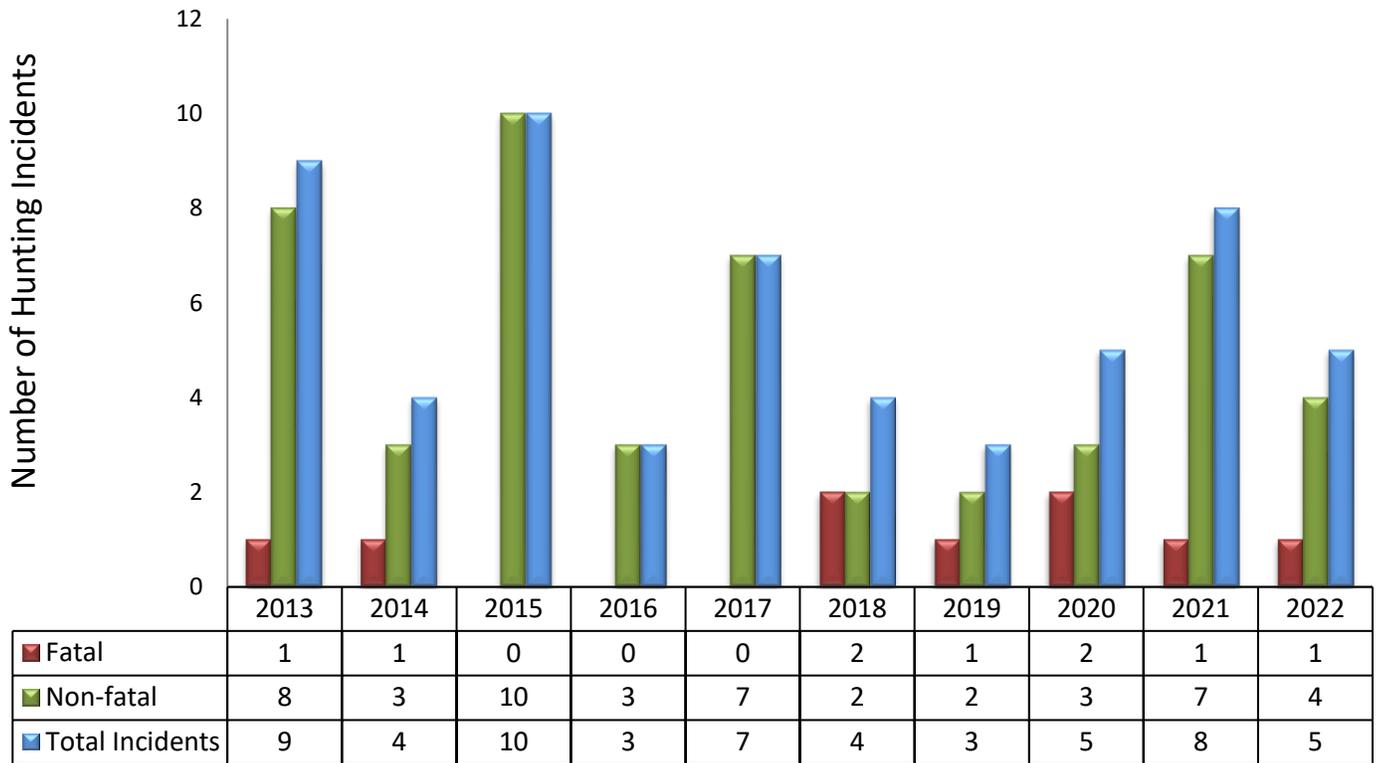
## Nebraska Hunter Numbers vs. Hunting Incidents 1975-2022

Timeframe	Average # of Certified Hunters Per Year	Average # of Hunting Incidents Per Year	Average # of Fatalities Per Year	Average # of Hunting Incidents Per 100,000 Hunters
1975-79	176,880	21.8	3.0	12.4
1980-84	178,864	16.8	1.4	9.5
1985-89	158,412	16.6	1.4	10.7
1990-94	169,683	14.2	0.6	8.3
1995-99	186,567	11.0	1.0	5.9
2000-04	177,803	13.6	0.6	7.9
2005-09	171,215	10.2	1.0	5.8
2010-14	177,579	8.4	1.2	4.6
2015-19	178,768	5.4	0.6	3.0
2020-2022*	181,192	6.0	1.3	3.3

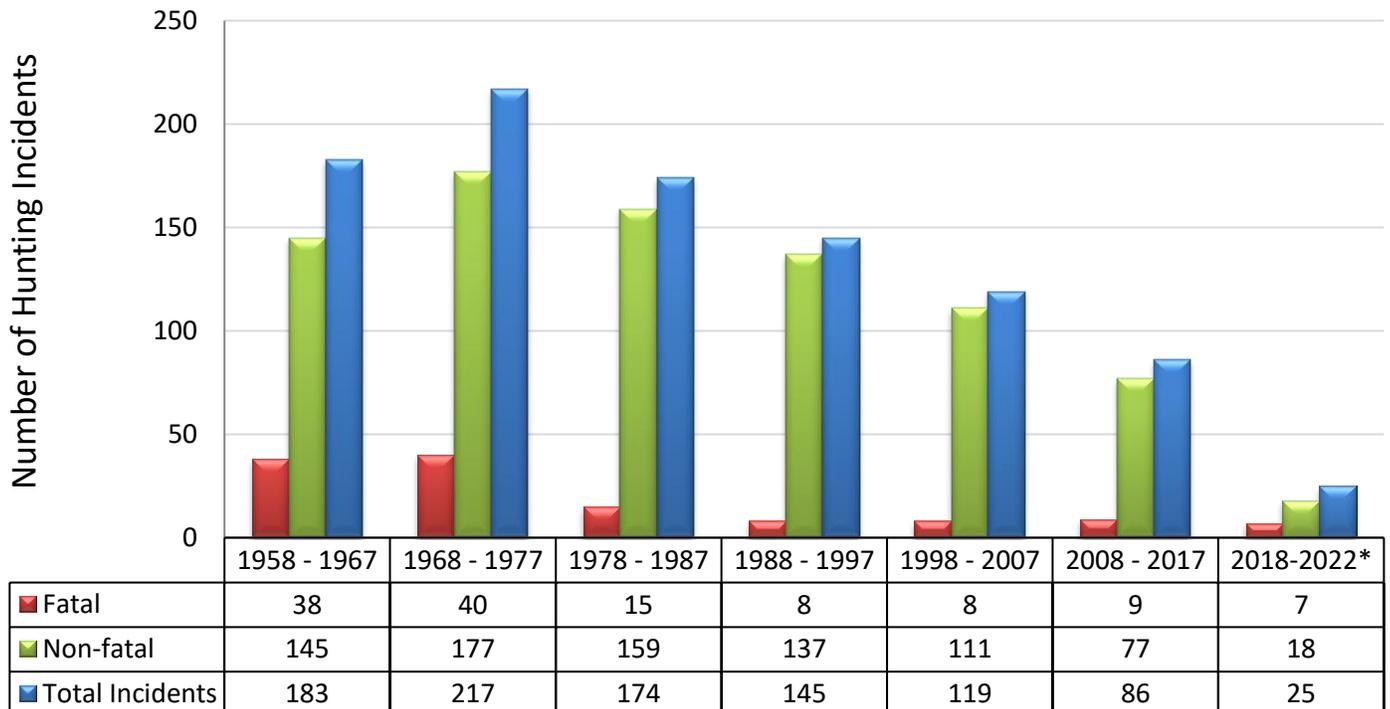
\*only three years of data for this period

The average number of hunting incidents per 100,000 hunters has dramatically decreased from the 1970s to today. Adjusting the average number of incidents per 100,000 hunters allows a direct comparison of hunting incidents across periods of time and fluctuating hunter numbers.

## Nebraska Hunting Incidents: 10-Year Summary 2013-2022



## Nebraska Hunting Incidents: Historical Summary 1958 – 2022



\*only five years of data for this column

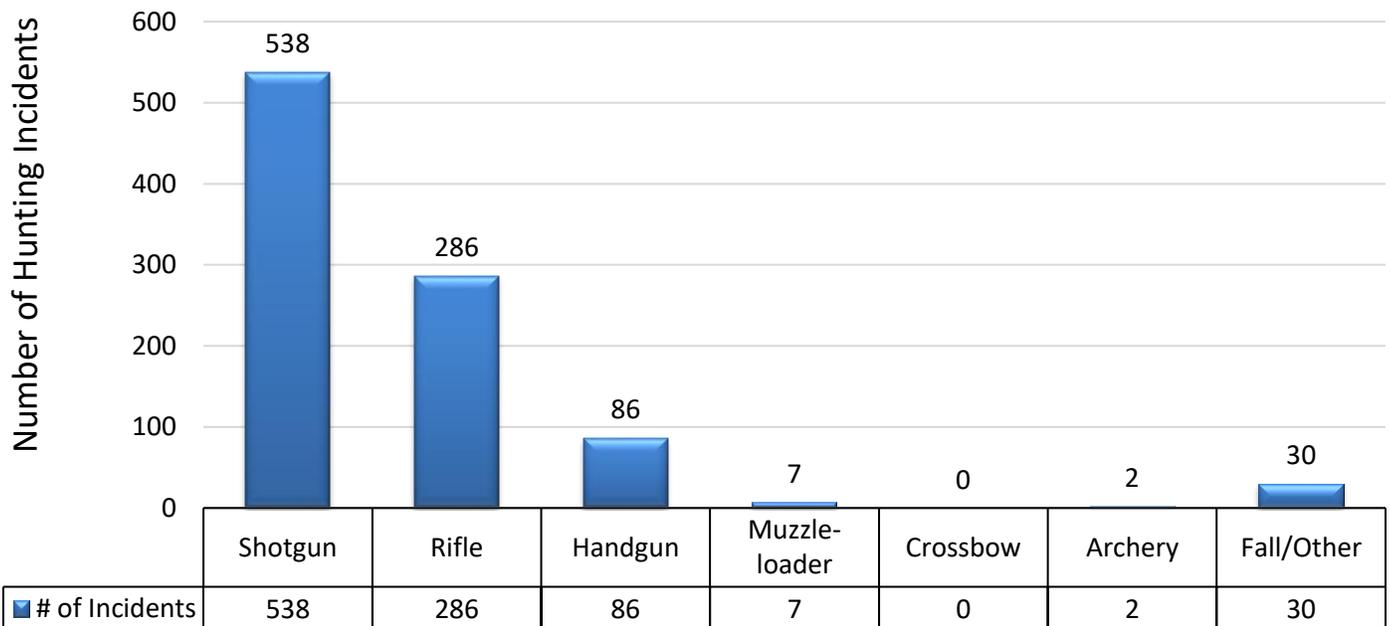
## 2022 Nebraska Hunting Incidents: Equipment Type

CATEGORY	# OF INCIDENTS
Discharge of a shotgun	0
Discharge of a rifle	5
Discharge of a handgun	0
Bow and arrow	0
Crossbow	0
Fall from elevated platform	0
Other	0

## 2022 Nebraska Hunting Incidents: Equipment Type



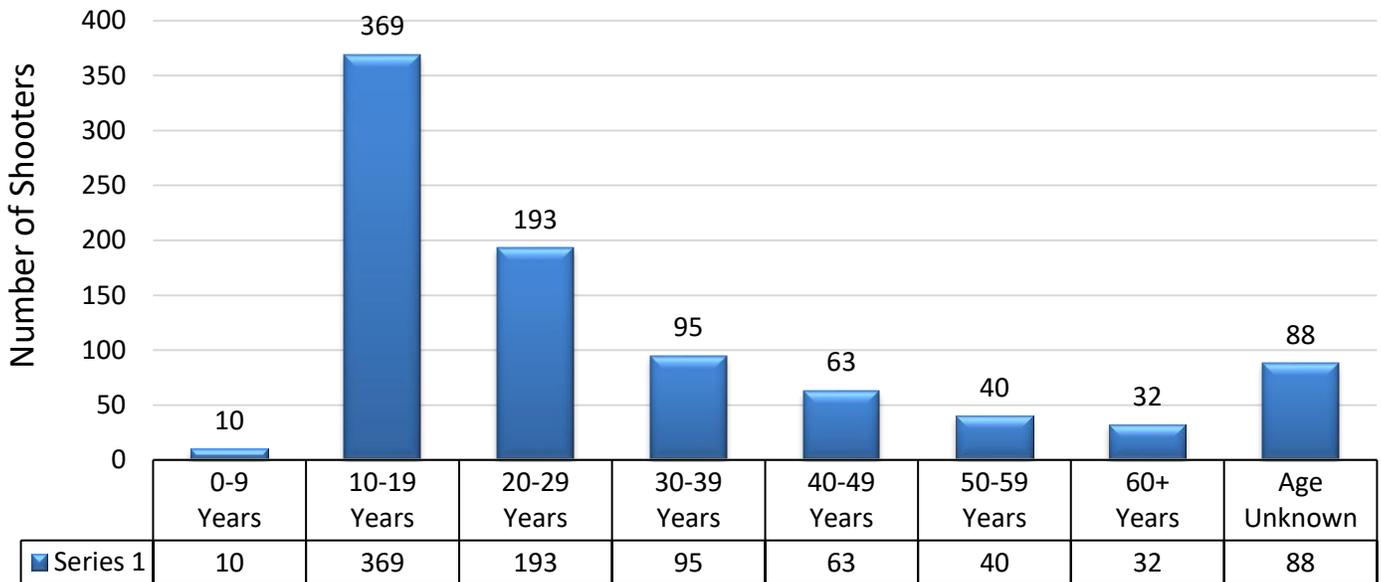
## Nebraska Hunting Incidents: Equipment Type 1958 – 2022



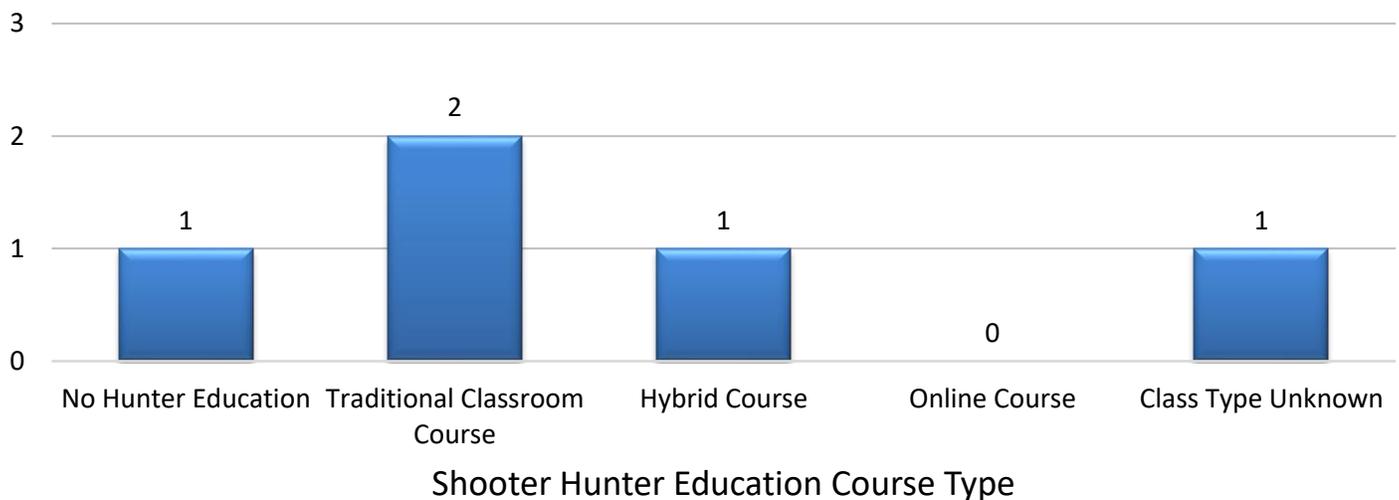
## 2022 Nebraska Hunting Incidents: Age & Gender (M = male; F = female)

AGE	SHOOTER	VICTIM	SELF-INFLICTED	FALL
0-9				
10-19	2 M	1 M		
20-29		2 M		
30-39		1M		
40-49	1 M			
50-59	1 M		1 M	
60 and older				

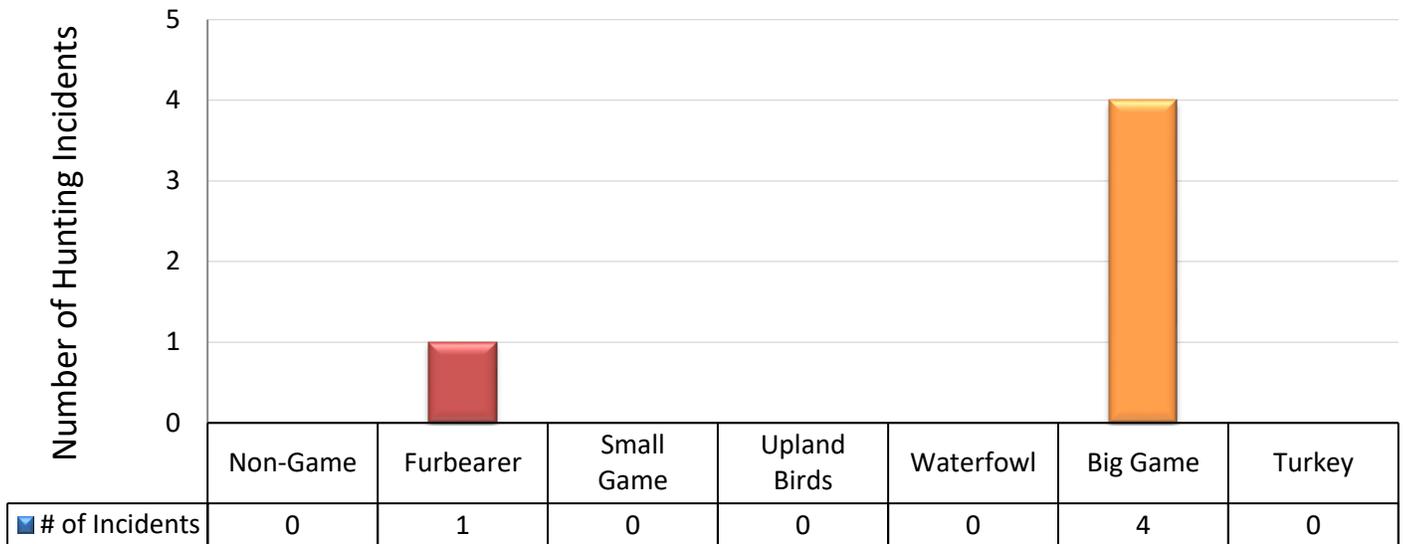
## Nebraska Hunting Incidents: Shooter Age 1958 – 2022



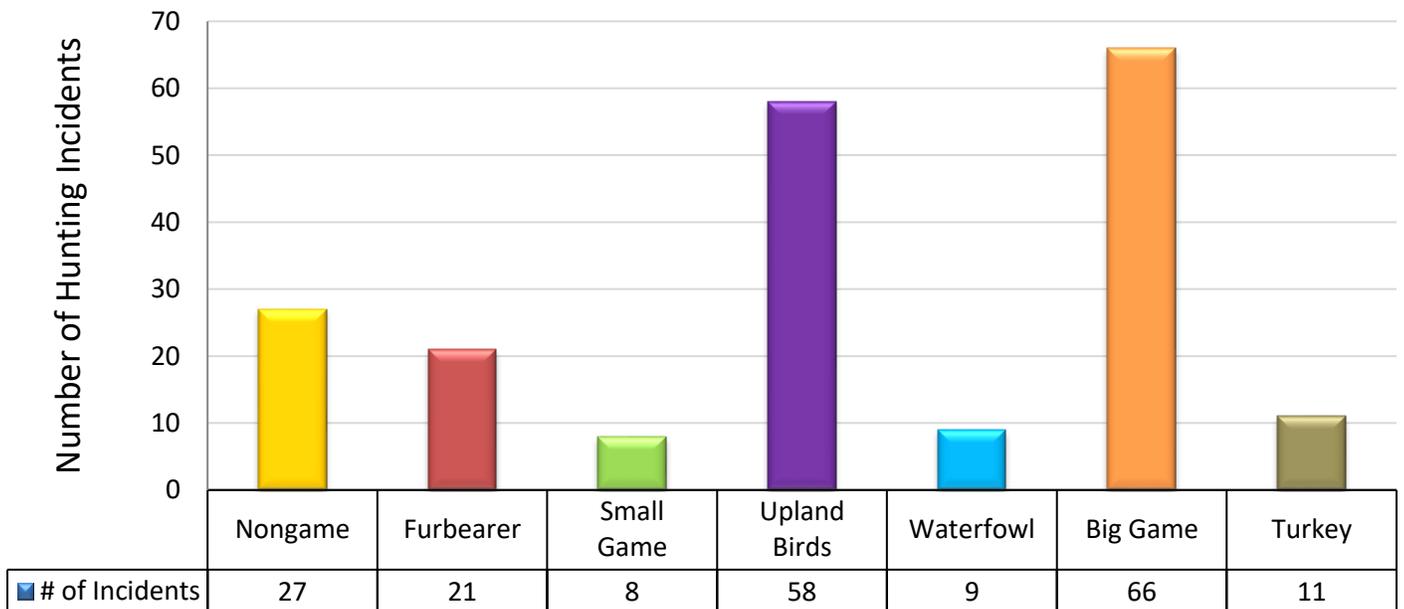
## 2022 Nebraska Hunting Incidents: Hunter Education Course Type



## 2022 Nebraska Hunting Incidents: Type of Game Hunted



## Nebraska Hunting Incidents: Type of Game Hunted 2000 – 2022



**Non-game** includes all mammals and birds not listed in the hunting guide (coyote, prairie dog, porcupine, woodchuck, common pigeon, European starling, English sparrow, etc.)

**Furbearer** includes all animals listed as furbearers in the hunting guide (bobcat, mink, raccoon, badger, red fox, gray fox, Virginia opossum, long-tailed weasel, striped skunk, etc.)

**Small Game** includes rabbits and squirrels

**Upland Birds** includes pheasant, quail, dove, snipe, woodcock, partridge, rail and grouse

**Waterfowl** includes ducks, geese and coot

**Big Game** includes deer, antelope, elk, mountain (bighorn) sheep and mountain lion

**Turkey** includes all species of wild turkey

**Target** includes all types of target practice and sighting in equipment

# Nebraska Hunting Incident Statistical Summary 1958 – 2022

Includes all hunting incidents resulting in injury or death which meet IHEA-USA reporting criteria  
Compiled by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

<b>NEBRASKA HUNTING INCIDENTS</b>	<b>1958 - 2022</b>	<b>2022</b>
Fatal injury	125	1
Non-fatal injury	824	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>949</b>	<b>5</b>
Self-inflicted (includes fatal and non-fatal)	369	1
Caused by someone else (includes fatal and non-fatal)	576	4
Fall/Other (includes fatal and non-fatal)	4	0

<b>PRIMARY CAUSES OF HUNTING INCIDENTS</b>	<b>1958 - 2022</b>	<b>2022</b>
Victim covered by shooter swinging on game	181	2
Victim out of sight of shooter	88	0
Shooter stumbled and fell	65	0
Victim in line of fire	63	3
Removing or placing a firearm into vehicle	62	1
Riding in vehicle with loaded firearm	57	0
Trigger caught on an object	42	1
Victim mistaken for game	36	0
Defective firearm	30	0
Unloading firearm	30	1
Careless or reckless handling of firearm	27	1
Improper crossing of fence	27	0
Loading firearm	24	0
Firearm fell from insecure rest	22	0
Horseplay with loaded firearm	22	0
Ricochet	17	0
Fall from tree stand	17	0
Using firearm as rest or brace	6	0
Other	7	0

## TOTAL HUNTING INCIDENTS BY AGE

	1958 – 2022		2022	
	Shooter	Victim	Shooter	Victim
0-9 years old	10	12	0	0
10-19 years old	369	361	2	1
20-29 years old	193	190	0	2
30-39 years old	95	135	0	1
40-49 years old	63	103	1	0
50-59 years old	40	64	2	1
Over 60 years old	32	42	0	0
Age unknown	88	21	0	0